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WHO BETRAYED SPAIN?

• Roberto

WE MUST not hesitate to show up the fraud that is now being perpetrated on the workers of the world on the basis of the Spanish carnage, though it may hurt the feelings of the simple-minded followers of our cleverest "friends of labor."

Addressing the cynical pack of non-interventionists in Geneva, the Spanish Foreign Minister del Vayo said: "The bloody battlefields of Spain are actually the battlefields of the next world war." If he meant to soften the hearts of the "democratic" friends of the Spanish Republic, well and good. But he was, at the same time, quite helplessly, helping to strengthen a fraudulent belief that is assiduously being impressed on the minds of the people of Europe in order to prepare it for the next international slaughter. It is the belief that the next world war will be fought between "democratic" States, on one side, and "Fascist" States on the other side. It is the belief that this alignment of forces is already apparent in the international card game that is now being played over bleeding Spain. Doing so, del Vayo was (again, quite helplessly) hiding the principal foreign instigators of the rebellion.

Who are the principal foreign instigators of the rebellion? Do we perceive in the bawdy comedy carried on in Geneva and London the prologue to a war between Fascism and Democracy? Let us consider the stage and the comedians.

On July 18 the army officers in Spanish Morocco led their forces into a rebellion that soon spread over the entire republic. Here was a well prepared attempt to clamp back on the country a military dictatorship similar to Primo de Rivera's. I have already pointed out (in the complete article written for your May issue) that such a move in Spain would lack the popular support and the program of radical social reform that could merit it the term "fascist." On the other hand, if by recent vulgar usage "fascist" has come to mean reactionary, rightist, feudalistic, clerical, etc. then let Franco and Mola and their British supporters be called Fascists. (This mystification, too, is a part of the general propaganda preparing us for enthusiastic participation in the next World War in which "democratic" powers will supposedly measure off with "fascist" powers.) And I have already pointed out that the success of the rebellion was made possible by the negligence of the Popular Front government. But it is not enough to speak of negligence here. The Popular Front government in Spain, like its replicas elsewhere, had a contradictory program that was certain to lead to this eventuality. It was going to adjust the difficulties of capitalism in Spain and, at the same time, was going to attempt to satisfy the popular discontent that gave it political power. Spain like the rest of the world was stricken by the crisis. The economic rise noticeable in other countries by 1936 was very slow in Spain—not so much because of the backwardness of the country as a result of the acute social struggle that had progressively grown more violent since the collapse of the neutrals' war prosperity in the Iberian peninsula. The capitalist emancipation of Spain was still in the throes of achievement. "In this process (of emancipation from traditional social and political forms that hamper economic development) revolution is

necessary in order to shatter the outworn State forms dating from epochs of natural economy and simple merchant production, and in order to create modern States conforming to the exigencies of capitalist production. But these revolutions . . . show alongside of the immediate objectives of advancing capitalism certain obsolete precapitalist antagonism, as well as distinctly new political contradictions that already seem to menace capitalist domination.

It is this mixture of motives that determines the depth and powerful enthusiasm of these movements, and at the same time hampers and retards their victorious course" (*Accumulation of Capital*).

The Popular Front government of 1936 was not much different in makeup and program from the government of the republic of 1931. Azaña's first government was superseded by a rightward reaction, which swept the country after the liberal republicans had failed to satisfy the social discontent that brought the republic into being. Failure in 1936 was almost certain to bring a change in popular sentiment but this time probably not in favor of the feudalistic and clerical politicians like Gil Robles and Calvo Sotelo, or fly-by-night types like Lerroux. In its attempt to cope with the difficulties of situation, the Popular Front government was obliged to give fight to the reactionaries: the numerically weak, make-believe "señorito" Fascist of the *Falange española*, the militarist groups and the clericals, who all represented the "obsolete pre-capitalist antagonism" standing in the way of the development of Spain. But it also had to combat the political trends (anarchists, syndicalists, "left-socialists") that already presumed to threaten the domination of the still undeveloped capitalism in Spain. In face of these two threats, the Popular Front government could not dismiss the old army staff,—though it knew that the generals had the means of imposing their will on the country and were in the position to act before it was too late. Observers used to call the military set found about General Mola "progressive-republican" in contradistinction to the blunt "Primo de Rivera" outlook of Franco and Sanjurjo (the exiled general, who was slated to head the militarist rebellion but was killed in his hop from Portugal). The fact is that the foreign backers of the rebellion cared little whether their agents stood for an economically progressive Spain or a Spain where the interests of the landlords and the property of the Church were not interfered with. Their first regard was for the solvency of their enterprises in Spain. Portugal had a military dictatorship in the manner of the old Primo de Rivera. Foreign property, foreign investments, development by foreign entrepreneurs were safe in Portugal. In Spain they were being made unsafe, and even threatened with destruction, by the activity of the ultra-left elements. What was done in Portugal could be duplicated in Spain.

The Popular Front in Spain, like the Popular Front elsewhere, was a loose, coalitionist body that appeared as a result of the change in the Communist International from an attitude of open animosity to the Social-Democracy to a policy of political collaboration with any social-democratic and bourgeois parties ready to join in the defence of the allies of the Soviet Union. This change was due to the reemergence of Germany as an important imperialist rival in the world arena. Hitler's rise to power, the Nazi program of German imperialist aggrandizement, brought a close duplication of the political alignments that existed in Europe in 1914: France united militarily and financially with Russia; Italy nominally friendly to Germany but bound to fol-

low, in face of actual war, a course dictated to it by its geographic conditions and its fear of a great Germany; Germany seeking to dominate the Balkans, striving to win over Great Britain to neutrality in case of war, and doing its utmost to reconstruct the alliance represented in 1914 by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Popular Fronts in France and Czechoslovakia had as their reason for the existence the task of backing up the Franco-Czech-Soviet military pact with popular support. What was the purpose of the Popular Front in Spain?

The Popular Front government in Spain was primarily expected to satisfy the violent popular discontent which (due to the conditions summarized above) might have resulted in a revolutionary explosion, and started a revolutionary conflagration in nearby France, disorganizing the French armed forces, shattering the Franco-Soviet war arrangement, alienating Great Britain and Italy, opening the way to the disciplined might of Hitlerite Germany, leaving Czecho-Slovakia and the Soviet Union as the sole weakened opponents of the Nazi war machine. Do you recall the immediate effect of the outbreak of the Russian Revolution on the allied front in 1917? It would have signified the defeat of the allies but for the intervention of the United States. A revolution in France would be the signal for an attack by the confident Nazi war machine. A revolution in France would therefore have to be suppressed through the physical efforts of the Western allies of France and the moral efforts of the U.S.S.R. A revolution in France foreboded frightening possibilities for its allies. The Spanish Popular Front had the job of diverting, of placating, the tendency to a revolutionary outbreak in Spain, which might spread into France.

The large Spanish Socialist Party was therefore being taken in tow by the much less numerous but richer Communist Party of Spain, which like all Bolshevik organizations could be relied on to carry out the orders of the international center. The Socialist Party of Spain was given a most costly and thorough treatment of pro-Soviet enlightenment and Bolshevik Communist infiltration. The progressive bourgeois program of Azaña and Giral were re-embodyed with leftism by the powerful Communist Party propaganda apparatus. The hope was to destroy the influence of the uncomfortable Spanish syndicalists through the amalgamation of the C.N.T. with the U.G.T. The right kind of publicity would succeed in making the masses believe that the Anarchists were public enemies, untouchables. Social Democrat and Communist assault guards were already being used to break up strikes organized by the syndicalists. In the case of an increased wave of "leftism" a very leftist government of social-democrats like Largo Caballero could replace the bourgeois republicans, placate the masses with the right kind of mummery, keep the country in order, till there was a full economic revival. There was even talk of immediately borrowing money and encouraging such revival through government aid to private and semi-private enterprise, and what was most essential, to the peasants, who not only needed land but credit with which to work the land. The Popular Front government wanted to placate the masses. Yet it was afraid to lose the services of the army. There was the constant menace of a revolutionary outburst from below.

The rebellion of the Spanish militarists left the Popular Front government of Spain without an army, and without war equipment. To defend itself against the rebels the government had to arm the people. Arming the people left the government helpless before the very eventuality it was expected to avoid: revolutionary action by "extreme" elements.

The Madrid government was the legitimate government of

Spain. In Geneva it was counted among the democratic powers, together with France and Great Britain. It was marked out for special friendship by the Soviet Union, the recognition of which was one of the first of Azaña's official acts. What was done for the threatened legitimate, democratic, pro-Soviet government of Spain by its international friends and associates? How did the players of *Welt politik* in Paris, London, Rome, Berlin, Moscow, behave when they learned of the Spanish rebellion?

The rightist French press, as well as the reactionary press all over the world, immediately invented (for domestic political reasons and because of their hatred of democratic governments) stories of shipments by the French government. More imaginative stories were being published by the government press of Italy and Germany to cover up the credit sales made by these governments, or by private national concerns, to the revolting generals. People began to say that in the Spanish civil war the Fascist States (Italy and Germany) were already sparring with the Democratic States (France, England and the neo-democratic U.S.S.R.).

The grounding of Italian aviators in Algeria and the use of German war equipment made plain that the rebels were receiving aid from these two powers. On the other hand, all the war supplies flowing from Italy and Germany amounted to little compared to the war materials given to the rebels directly and continuously by the government of Portugal, practically a British colony, the dictator of which could not last a cool morning without the good will of Great Britain. The Portuguese government does not do what the British Foreign Office disapproves of, and it always does what the Foreign Office suggests.

The Spanish rebels also benefitted liberally by the British diplomacy. One of the most striking examples of this is the attitude of the representative of the British government at the sitting of the Administrative Committee of Tangiers, when he joined with the Italian representative to vote measures putting the international zone under the domination of Franco. But by far important was the staging by the British Foreign Office of the farce of the "non-intervention" pact, the non-intervention pact that is really a blockade, depriving the legitimate, democratic government of Spain of the right to buy freely war supplies in the world market in its own defence.

The British are reported to have sent the word to Delbos and Deladier as soon as the rebellion began. Blum was told by his radical associates that the price of allowing arms to go to Spain would be the destruction of the Popular Front government in France. For before losing the good will of the British, the radical ministers would resign.

There was, however, another force for non-intervention. On the 25th of July the French Council of Ministers met to debate the Spanish situation. The Socialists held out for having the French government live up to its contracts with the legitimate government of Spain. The Council of Ministers was supposed to have been approached by the parliamentary Committee of the Communist Party of France. The French Bolsheviks, model 1936, suggested that the Popular Front government and the peace of Europe must not be endangered by rash acts. It is understood that through the Parliamentary Committee of the C.P.F. spoke the diplomats of the Kremlin. On the same day the Council of Ministers voted unanimously not to interfere in any manner in the interior conflict of Spain. And on the 31st of the same month, M. Yvon Delbos could declare to the Chamber of Deputies: "We could have given arms to the legitimate, de jure and de facto, government of Spain. We have not done so." There is a suggestion of regret in Delbos' words. He well knew that the supply of

arms flowing to the rebels from Germany, Italy and especially Portugal continued unabated. It is possible that at a certain time the French radical ministers were even reconsidering their stand. There is no doubt that they were held captive by the reported warning of the British government that, if a European conflict broke out as a result of allowing arms to go to Spain, France would have to face the enemy alone.

On the 1st of August the French government addressed to all interested governments a pressing appeal for the rapid adoption and rigorous observation in regards to Spain of the usual rules of non-intervention. It decided not to authorize any shipments of arms to Spain, even in fulfillment of contracts made before the outburst of the rebellion. However, it reserved "the liberty of choice in the application of this decision" in view of the war supply shipments that might be made to the rebels. Diplomatic conversations took place between the French and British governments, the latter declaring that it would take back its liberty of action in the matter in case that international incidents would result from foreign intervention in Spain.

On the 6th of August, Italy answered the French appeal. It asked if "moral solidarity" did not constitute a striking and dangerous form of intervention." The same day the French government submitted a draft agreement "fixing the exact rules which would make feasible the common engagements." And on the 8th of August the French Council of Ministers decided to suspend all exports to Spain which were not included in their previous decision. On the 15th of the month there was an exchange of notes between the French and British governments on the "prohibition of the direct and indirect exportation of all arms, and war material, as well as of all airplanes, mounted or unmounted, and all war ships." Two days later, the German government expressed its reservations. On the 23rd of August the government of the U.S.S.R. confirmed officially its verbal expression of adhesion to the "non-intervention" agreement. The next day Germany also adhered to the pact.

The French blockade and the Soviet neutrality were rigidly effective. And the rebels continued to receive arms from Portugal, Germany and Italy. It became plain that we were not facing here a preliminary rehearsal of a conflict between antagonistic "democratic" and "fascist" blocs of European States. What we had here was a sort of *cordon sanitaire* thrown around burning Spain. To give arms to the Spanish government indiscriminately might mean arming the erratic tendencies that Azaña's government, backed by its social-democratic and communist partners, tried hard to combat. It was dangerous to throw fuel on a local fire which might grow into a European conflagration. Here was the usual solidarity of the international bourgeoisie against the menace of social revolution. It was already suggested above that revolutionary trouble in France might have blown up the military organization of the British-French-Soviet bloc. Besides these two considerations—the first, generally bourgeois; the second, sectional bourgeois—we must consider the behavior of the various "non-interventionists," democratic and avowedly fascist, from the angle of their individual interests.

German Nazi clubs in Spain, as elsewhere, existed to serve the economic and political interests of the Third Reich. Hitler is interested in seizing every opportunity to improve his situation in the competitive capitalist game played by his State. The Spanish government was about to venture into economic enterprise. There was no doubt that Azaña's government was decidedly anti-Nazi. Not only did a return to Primo de Rivera's appear more favorable

to German business chances, but timely action in favor of the right party, in a reactionary upheaval, offered to the Nazi gamblers the opportunity to acquire political advantages in European Spain and territorial claims in Morocco. Here was a gamble worth playing, especially since the advantages thus gained could always be traded over the international gaming tables. Similar reasons guided the role played by Mussolini and his associates, who immediately saw an opportunity of rivaling Britain's political hegemony over the Iberian peninsula—another talking point in the games for advantages that Mussolini has played with France and Great Britain since 1924. (Mussolini flirts with Hitler in order to raise the purchasing price that France and Britain will have to pay him to keep Italy on the side of the allies in the coming war. Italy can not permit itself to join with Germany in spite of their common "fascism." Fascism is national. It is economic and political ultra-nationalism. The capitalist needs of Italy, decided to a great extent by its geographic location, and not by the supposed sympathy of fascists for fascists, will determine finally the stand that Mussolini will take in the coming war.) The Italian occupation of the Balearic Islands, or even Catalonia, would immediately raise Mussolini's value in the political market. Joining in with the military rebels might even land Italian troops in Tangiers. Mussolini had tried similarly bold acts before and had at times met with success—to his own surprise. It was worth taking a chance to win the Spanish generals from—from whom?

The Nazis and the Italian Fascists were fishing in troubled waters to serve their national interests. But the chief instigators of the revolt were the democratic Britishers. I do not mean the British people, whose representatives meet to talk in the Parliament in London. I mean the private British capitalist interests. Spain is the most important metal-ore producer in Europe. Nearly all the Spanish mines, iron, lead, copper, sulphur, are in the hands of British companies. It is probable that the British mining companies felt that the Popular Front government could not settle the social disorder raging in Spain. There were too many strikes. They wondered if the Popular Front government could stay the dangerous, intransigent C.N.T. They remembered the economic quiet that ruled the country under Primo de Rivera's military dictatorship. What was done in Portugal, where dictator Salazar was installed at the suggestion of the British interests, could be accomplished in Spain. The Foreign Office serves British business interests. Would the overthrow of Azaña's government necessarily conflict with the general interests of British imperialism? Did the immediate acts of the British Foreign and War Offices favor an important fraction of British capitalism, the mining companies with investments and property in Spain, to the detriment of the greater interests of British capitalism? Would British policy in regards to the Spanish situation therefore change in the near future? It is interesting to note that the market quotations of the *Rio Tinto* stock (the most important British mining concern in Spain) fell two days after the generals' coup, when it seemed that the rebellion was about to be smothered by the action of the Spanish population. The *Rio Tinto* stock climbed higher and higher as the militarists continued to gain victories.

What consideration motivated the behavior of the French government and the attitude of the several political groups of which it is composed? Indeed, the Radicals, the representatives of the progressive elements in French capitalism, were paralyzed at first by their fear of revolution. They were also afraid that any sort of help to Spain would antagonize the turbulent rightist opposition

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A LETTER TO MOSCOW

• Ignazio Silone

From "Arbeiter-Zeitung," Basel

(Silone lives to fight Fascism. He is the author of the incomparable *Fontamara*, dramatized and staged in this country under the title of *Bitter Stream*. Silone has written a history of Italian Fascism, and recently there appeared his compelling *Bread and Wine* (published in German as *Brot und Wein*), a novel describing the experiences of an anti-fascist upon his secret return to his native land.

This "letter" was addressed by Silone to the editors of the magazine *Das Wort*, an ornately comfortable "cultural" publication now being published in Moscow for the mind-forming of liberals and "pop-front" literati of the German tongue. The fat *Das Wort* has drawn into its service the most talented type-writers among the German exiles. In view of the fact that only the Nazi and Soviet backed publications can pay professional writers and since one exile sheet after another is being drawn into one or the other of the two monopolies, Silone's letter is actually a gesture of extreme daring and almost Quixotic defiance. But Silone is not (to use his own words) a literary man. He is first a socialist (that is, a person who works for the establishment of socialism) and a critical opponent of that political redressing of capitalism called Fascism.

We print his "letter to Moscow" not because we are indignant at the executions. Silone suggests below that the executed were largely responsible for bringing into being the executioner State. We print Silone's letter because we hope that reading it a number of more or less literary, more or less intellectual, good people, who stand in awe of illustrious names, will become aware of an ailment that, together with other ideological influences, tends to stultify their thinking and helps to perpetuate capitalism. We are referring to the dread disease of juridical cretinism described by Silone below. To become aware of the ailment is to take the first step toward its cure.)

YOU HAVE suggested that I correspond with Mr. Ernst Ottwald on the subject of my novel *Brot und Wein*, so that our letters might then be published in your magazine. I have received Mr. Ottwald's essay and have prepared my reply. However, I am sorry to inform you that I cannot permit myself to have my name appear any longer in your publication—even as that of an occasional contributor.

You know that I stand for the defence of culture, especially where it is threatened by fascism. You also know that I have always fought on the side of the workers and peasants and for a better world. And you are aware that I have attacked above all the fascist instruments of justice, those machines of destruction that are used so effectively to exterminate all political opposition, the fascist courts, in which the right of defence is taken away from the accused and "confessions" are wrung from them by means of subtle and barbarous tortures that often the strongest cannot withstand.

You say that you are in agreement with all who fight against fascism. Indeed, you claim for yourselves the role of leaders and vanguard in the fight against fascism. But if at the same time you express your solidarity with what is taking place in Russia, if at the same time you approve that oppositionists in Russia are exiled by means of ordinary police orders and tried without being told of the nature of the accusations against them, without

receiving the smallest opportunity of proving their innocence through witnesses or independent counsels free from the threat of reprisal—of what value, in view of all this, are your platonic protests against fascist police methods and against fascist justice? In view of this, what can be the content of sincerity carried by the torrents of words that you pour out monthly on the theme of the elementary rights of man, on the subject of human values and on the need of the defence of culture? What, in view of this, is the worth of that humanism which you say you represent?

Only by resorting to sophistry, to word juggling, can you deny that the trials that have just taken place in Russia represent anything other than the collective murder of persons who happened to be in disagreement with the political line now dominating the country. These "trials" were dressed up in the forms of legality and justice. It was quite evident, however, that they were only macabre caricatures of justice. No man with a healthy understanding of human beings can believe such "confessions."

The entire gigantic propaganda apparatus of which the Soviet government disposes has been set in motion with the purpose of diverting public opinion from the real situation in Russia, with the purpose of veiling the real nature of the objections raised by the executed oppositionists against the government's policies. Thus, attempts have been made to represent the entire matter as a simple moral "purge." Zinoviev, Kamenev, Tolski, Bukharin, Radek and the other Bolsheviks have been made to appear to be corrupt creatures in the pay of the German Gestapo and having the desire of establishing Fascism in Russia. But you ought to understand that by now the trick of moral inculcation, with which you always attempt to drive fear into the minds of those who disagree with you, no longer works on many of us. We are no longer impressed by the delirium of words that possesses you in such junctures. On the contrary, as a result of both, many of us now first come to feel the need of careful thought and honest discussion on the subject.

When do people falsify the position of a political opponent? When do people impute to him criminal intentions? When do they murder political opponents or force them to commit suicide? When they are too weak or too cowardly to carry on against their opponents honest discussion and an open struggle over the basic problems of the country. We might grant isolated cases of corruption and dishonesty; we are not in a position to acquire facts. But when it is a question of an entire political current, represented by men who had fought all their lives against Tsarist absolutism and the international bourgeoisie, when it is a question of men called Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Bukharin, —then no floods of propaganda will succeed in making us believe that what is facing us here is a simple moral "purge" concerning a band of criminals. Any human being in the possession of healthy five senses will understand that a government employing such means in a struggle against political opponents would probably succumb if it permitted itself to run the risk of honest discussion before the public opinion of the country. We have one way of opposing the defamation spread by the Soviet government, and that is to seize the problem by its roots. We must ask:

"What has become of the Russian Revolution? What are the objective reasons for the sharpening of the internal contradictions in the Soviet Union?"

The task of the journalists and the writers in the service of the Russian government (and therefore the task of the magazine *Das Wort*) is cleverly to suppress the all too dangerous discussion on the subject, to turn it aside by means of talk about the new

Russian Constitution and the democratic rights which it is said to assure Russian citizens. But such a maneuver can fool only intellectuals devoid of any critical sense and suffering from the mental sickness called "juridical cretinism." Juridical cretinism consists especially of the habit of considering the laws of a country as the exact representation of the social relations obtaining among the citizens of that country. It is this juridical cretinism that explains, for example, the mental feebleness of those intellectuals who go to Italy, study the country's Fascist laws and come home convinced that there is no longer any capitalism in Italy, as it was abolished there by the same Fascist laws. And should such a traveller chance to go to France, he would return as deeply convinced that the ideals of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" form the basis of the social relationships existing in France, since those are the fateful words that he will see on all government stationery, on all courthouses, on all schoolhouses and over all public comfort stations.

Socialist criticism, since its foundation by Marx and Engels, has warned us against this disease of juridical cretinism. Socialists have always criticized formal democracy, abstract freedom, equality on paper. Socialists have always said that we cannot judge a country as a society by its laws but only by the real social relationships existing among human beings. Emil Ludwig, Lion Feuchtwanger and Jacob Buehrer go into raptures over the new Soviet Constitution (too much must not be expected from literary folk). But no Socialist industrial or agricultural worker who has been inoculated with Marxist understanding, and has thus been made immune to juridical cretinism, will place any faith in the abstract paragraphs of the Soviet Constitution. In view of the August slaughterfest, he will also ask:

"What has become of the Russian Revolution? What are the objective reasons for this aggravation of the inner contradictions in the Soviet Union?"

I have the feeling of committing by means of this letter (I have made certain that it will find publication) an act of justice toward all my friends and readers who have learned to know me and have become acquainted with my way of thinking. I am enabled to speak frankly on the matter especially because there is no connection between me and the executed Russian revolutionists, whom, by the way, I hold just as responsible as the others for the present state of affairs in Russia.

In this letter I express solidarity with neither one or another Russian faction. This letter is a necessary act springing logically from my general anti-fascist position. If I remained silent now, I should not have the courage to write another single line against the Fascist dictatorships.

I am convinced—and this is the conviction that I have tried to express in all my writings—that to arm ourselves against Fascism we do not need material means above all. To oppose Fascism, we need neither heavy armaments nor bureaucratic apparatuses. What we need above all is a different way of looking at life and at human beings. My dear friends, without this different way of looking at life and at human beings, we shall ourselves become Fascists. And I refuse to be a Fascist—even a Red Fascist.

Translated by Arthur Tower

M. Yvon's incomparable "Ce qu'est devenu la révolution russe" (What Has Become of the Russian Revolution) will be reviewed in the next issue of the I. R.

Proofs, Comrade Executioner!

• Victor Serge

IF, UPON reflection, the crime of August 25, 1936, has been a revelation to those who follow the Russian Revolution—a revelation even to those who have followed it for some time without illusions—it is evident that for Stalin it was only an episode in a vast operation. The executions have shaken many consciences. But in a world accustomed to mass executions by dictators, and in a labor movement that is divided between a desire to believe in the U.S.S.R. and the influence of the far-flung Stalinist hookup, the executions have not immediately evoked reactions that could have stopped or even slowed up the continuation of Stalin's operation.

Accused under exactly the same conditions as several of the executed, as Trotsky and his son, as Sokolnikov, whose life (if he is still alive) hangs on a thread, Rykov and Boukharine have been freed, Radek has been put in prison, and silence has descended on Piatakov and Ouglanov. Here is a strange and slightly excessive cynicism. Do they mean to make us believe that the executed lied in certain cases and told the truth in other? How do you explain the "not guilty" granted to Rykov and Boukharine? But Rykov, who is officially declared to be innocent, disappears from public life, he is relieved of his position as People's Commissar of Communications without getting a new appointment. Hardly had he been declared innocent, when he was treated as if were guilty. It would be strange if justice, logic and truth played a part in the mess.

Rykov was in the Council of People's Commissars. He was Lenin's friend and companion. He had spent fifteen or twenty years of struggle of illegality, of imprisonment of Siberia, as a member of the old Bolshevik organization. He had undergone the greatest perils with total equanimity. He directed the statized economy during the heroic period. When Lenin died, he took his place as the head of the Soviet government. Here is a man who is being strangled quietly. Here is a man who is quite happy he has not as yet been thrown into a hole in the Souzdal. Does he recall the speech he made against us, leftists, at the time of our expulsion in 1927, when he menaced us with all the rigors of State repression? Like the rest of his generation, Rykov no doubt sees more clearly today. But it is too late.

I don't know how Boukharine will be eliminated, but he will be eliminated. With the exception of certain totally enslaved individuals and several hostages, all the old Bolsheviks will have to go. After the crime of the 25th of August—no matter what professions of fidelity they make to the genius-leader publicly—it would be impossible to permit them to remain in life, in the political sense of the word. For it is impossible that deep down in their hearts they have not themselves become desperate judges. The infamous things they are made to say, they say with their lips. But what do they think? Consider the case of Radek. He is arrested immediately after expressing his adoration of the leader, immediately after calling, in no less than four Izvestia columns, for the death of men who were his comrades for thirty years, arrested after he has dragged himself, by command or zeal, in mud mixed with blood before the genius-leader. Yagoda and Prokofiev are thrown aside. Lomov, the People's Commissar for Light Industry, is thrown aside. Kerjentev, the man who interested himself in everything, from radio to the arts, the dis-

heartened old Bolshevik, haunted by despair and remorse, old Kerjntsev is thrown aside.

When Antonov-Ovseenko—the insurrectionist of 1905, the leader of the attack on the Winter Palace in the evening of the 7th of November 1917, the director of the first red armies in the Ukraine, a Trotskyist faithful to the Old Man as long as there was political life in the party and then a capitulator, most probably because he hoped to survive to serve the cause again, for I do not think he is the kind of man who is bought off by the luxuries of Pullmans—when a man with the revolutionary past of an Antonov-Ovseenko is made to give his name to an article calling for the execution of his old friends, we can suppose that we are dealing here with an attempt to compromise the man for good in sticky ignominy, which he is not in the position to combat. (Antonov-Ovseenko was recently sent to Barcelona as the counsel-general of the U.S.S.R.)

The demotion of Yagoda, the People's Commissar of the Interior, the chief of the OGPU after Stalin's rise, and the simultaneous demotion of Prokofiev, a Chekist of the first period, who has proved himself to be ready for any job, have several explanations. In spite of all they have done for Stalin, Yagoda and Prokofiev are still men of 1917. They have much personal authority. Ejov, who replaces Yagoda, is nothing on his own account. He is a creature of the bureau staffs picked by the secretary general. Four or five years ago this Ejov had the job of keeping an eye on the literary folk of Moscow. He is an unimportant clerk of the Central Committee. He has neither a past nor personality. Yagoda knows too much. The Zinoviev trial has opened many eyes. The customary thing is to find a scapegoat. Yagoda himself, after the 1931 trial of the engineers accused of sabotage (and after many executions without trial), judged that his staff had played too great a part in preparing the ground for the mentioned trial and executions. (The usual thing is for the OGPU agents to commit the illegal acts, involve as many of the prospective victims as possible and procure "confessions" under the promise of clemency. *Tr.*) He then purged his offices, not without punishing some subordinates for having too well executed his own orders (there were even executions among the inquisitors themselves.) Finally, Yagoda was nominally compromised by the "conspiracy" that was recently built up on the basis of really existing sentiments and resentment. In the Boukharine-Kamenev conversations of 1928 (described in Chapter IV of Souvarine's *Staline*), which gives the key to yesterday's trial, Yagoda is mentioned by Boukharine as one of the Soviet dignitaries who would have been tickled at the elimination of the Georgian who "will devour us all..." Now he is in apparently permanent retreat in the department of Posts and Telegraph. The black cabinet will no doubt function as admirably without Yagoda.

With Ejov's promotion, the generation of Stalinists careerists acquires another key position. This set holds power in Leningrad with Jdanov, totally unknown yesterday, at the helm of things. In Moscow Stalin's generation is represented especially by another unknown, Khroustchev, now the secretary of party organization. In Caucasus we have Lavrenti Beria, another unknown, who suddenly revealed himself to the U.S.S.R. several years ago through his bold falsification of the history of the party in Transcaucasia and who is now achieving a brilliant official career.

I end these notes with a warning, and a question. The Soviet press has just launched against the Trotskyists of the Ukraine the accusation of preparing in conjunction with the Gestapo the separation of the Ukraine for the benefit of Poland and Germany. (Yes, you have read that.) This crazy accusation can mean

only one thing. People are going to be shot. Who? (Without doubt, Yuri Kotzioubinski and others. Perhaps Drobnis.) It is obvious that a new killing party is being prepared. Proofs, comrade executioner, we want proofs!

And here is the question. Is it true that Maria Joffe has committed suicide? I refuse to believe it. I know her as a valiant woman. She was the wife of the red ambassador Joffe, who rendered such great service to the revolution in Germany, China and Japan, before he himself committed suicide in Moscow upon being pushed to the wall. Since her husband's death in 1928, Maria Joffe has been alternately in prison and in exile. I can prove to you, dear monsieur Romain Rolland, that she did not kill Kirov. But is it possible that she herself has been murdered after being kept in a Stalinist cage for eight years? What great official conscience, what illustrious mouthpiece of Stalinism abroad would like to ask the Stalinist government this question?

Tr. by John Haddon

books

EASTERN MENACE. The Story of Japanese Imperialism.
Published by the Union of Democratic Control, London.

Reviewed by PAUL MATTICK

THIS document is addressed to the British "public," which is to be warned against the wiles of Japanese imperialism. It aims to influence British policy (by which the yellow imperialism was "half supported and half feared") so that the English may come out openly against Japan. The latter, we are told, "is organizing a Yellow Empire with the avowed policy of ending the rule of the white man in the East, and if she does fight Russia, the war will probably involve us all." The Union of Democratic Control prefers the rule of the "whites" to the rule of the "yellows", and it is glad that "the onward march of the Japanese has been temporarily checked by the enormous military preparations of the Soviet Union on her Far Eastern frontiers". However, "Japanese aggression would still further be checked if Great Britain, the U.S.A. and Russia were willing to cooperate in the Far East. The U.S.A. and Russia have already shown their willingness. The determining factor is the policy of the British government, which has helped Japan to become the most serious rival of British trade and the biggest danger to peace in the Pacific." The rising yellow competition—with the exception of the similarly yellow Chinese, whose favor is courted—is to be met by a united front of the white imperialists.

The authors lay stress upon the peculiarities of Japan brought about as a result of its retarded development along the path of capitalistic imperialism, and which they attack with the usual arguments about dumping, low wages and military rule. In order to assert itself against the world in which capitalism has already taken firm root, Japanese capital was obliged, in spite of its feudal backwardness, to adopt an extreme centralism. The close union of Capital and State, which first appears as a result of the "normal" process of capitalist development, was in Japan the necessary presupposition of successful capitalization. Closely connected with this circumstance are the fascist character of Japanese policy and the numerous inner contradictions that are an expression of the difficulties of adapting the various class and group interests to the rapidly changing economic situation. The stronger, however,

the inner friction, the greater is the urge to outer expansion and the more pronounced the nationalism of the country. The more aggressively the policy of expansion is conducted, the more intensively must the workers and peasants be exploited and the greater in turn must be the development of imperialism. Japanese imperialism is not a special form of phenomenon; it comes forth more unequivocally because at each step it comes into conflict with the imperialisms already established.

In order to make this competitive struggle agreeable to the English workers, they are told that their unemployment is due in large part to the unfair competition of the Japanese; they must defend themselves against Japanese imperialism. What, however, will the unemployed of Japan be told in case Japan should be beaten down by the united front of the whites? In reality, whether it is Japan or England that exports cotton piece goods to India should be a matter of indifference to the working population, for considered as a whole it makes no difference whether the Japanese or the English workers are without jobs. It never occurs to the Union of Democratic Control that the working class is quite in a position to do away with its entire dependence upon the laws of the market and could thus completely dispose of the problems discussed in this pamphlet. Ostensibly, Japanese imperialism is a particularly bad imperialism. Its competition is especially evil. It is combatted in the interest of the more respectable imperialisms. The stupidity of such a position makes it inconceivable that the publishers of the "Eastern Menace" themselves believe in it. We are rather presented here with the preparatory war propaganda, directed against the enemy of Russia. It is desired to mobilize the workers, together with their capitalist exploiters, for the defense of Russian interests. The only objection that may be made here is that the struggle against imperialism in Japan presupposes the struggle against one's own imperialism in other capitalist countries. If one strengthens his own imperialism, as the Union of Democratic Control endeavor to do, he necessarily strengthens also the Japanese. But, of course, these people have in reality nothing against imperialism itself. They merely want to eliminate that of their opponents. That is to say the Union of Democratic Control represents the Western Menace as against the Eastern.

Japan's advance is damaging to the interests of the various capitalist nations with imperialistic ventures in China. It also stands in the way of independent Chinese endeavors at building a capitalist economy. It is likewise injurious to the Asiatic interests of Russia. Japan is using China because she needs raw materials and favorable capital investments. In order to remain strong, Japan is obliged, like all other capitalist countries, including Russia, to grow stronger and stronger. It is only additional capital that makes secure the capital already at hand. It is only aggressiveness that protects it from disturbance. Anyone who has begun the capitalist invasion is obliged to continue it. Japanese expansion is bound to menace Russia, Russia is forced to build up her strength and herself become an imperialist power in order to assure her position.

From the protection of the frontiers there comes about the shifting of the frontiers. From peaceful trade with the neighboring countries there develops the struggle for their control. The struggle between Russia and Japan is not a struggle between communism and capitalism, but between two imperialisms, a struggle which of necessity results from capitalist production, whether this latter is under private or State direction. In this struggle, each of the parties looks for allies. Just as Japan has assured herself of the aid of Germany, so Russia turns now to England, as formerly to America.

The great advance of Japan began with Manchuria. Then

came North China, which is "in many respects an essential complement to Manchuria." And "from North China she can attempt to consolidate her position in Inner Mongolia." Mongolia, however, is "the largest importer of Russian goods in the East, and tables of Russo-Mongolian trade show an increase in the percentage of the Mongolian raw materials, which are imported by Russia." Mongolia under the control of Japan would enormously strengthen the military potentialities of the latter against Russia. Stalin has therefore warned Japan "That if she ventured to attack the Mongolian People's Republic and sought to destroy its independence, Russia would have to help that Republic." Now the Union of Democratic Control realizes that "there are some who would say that Soviet-Mongolian relations were based on 'Red Imperialism.'" This, however, it says, is not the case, because "Mongolia has long objected to Chinese rule." And for this reason alone "Japan would find that a war with the Mongolian Republic will be a very different proposition from fighting Manchuria. It would mean fighting a Soviet-equipped army."

This pamphlet contains, on one hand, continual references to the enormous power of Russia, by which Japanese imperialism will surely be wiped off the map. On the other hand, there is an endeavor to present the Eastern Menace as being enough of a danger to necessitate a united front of the "white" imperialist nations. Furthermore, there is an attempt to arouse the resistance of China against Japan. The favor of the Communist-killer Chiang Kai-shek is courted, and the authors wonder "whether he is the great leader who can rally the people of China around his banner, or just another Chinese General who plays for positions?" If Chiang Kai-shek really wants to proceed against Japan, he can do so only on condition of "ending the war against the Communists, and securing their neutrality or even obtaining their support." And, logically, the Communists also must then put an end to their struggle against Chiang Kai-shek, and then we have once more the great "national struggle of liberation," which can end only in a blood-bath for the workers.

In this connection it must be borne in mind that when Chinese Communists are mentioned in this pamphlet we have to do with tendencies which in reality have nothing to do with communism. As is brought out in a report quoted by the authors: "The general emphasis of the program of the Chinese Communists is eminently practical; aiming at the elimination of the most glaring abuses and disparities of the old system. Its immediate effects have undoubtedly been to create a more widely distributed set of vested interests for whose protection the beneficiaries will fight fiercely. The Chinese Communists leaders, however, have retained control of certain key positions within the economic structure, such as government lands, marketing supervision, cooperative trading and credit societies and banks, which may be utilized to extend the development of a socialized economy." So that China's struggle against Japan is to be carried on under communist slogans, yet capitalistically. Accordingly, in case Japan should be driven back, it would then, sooner or later, be a strong China that would have to be combatted as a new "Eastern Menace." But the future is indefinite, and no one worries about its eventualities. Today the enemy is Japan. The struggle against the "Eastern Menace" turns out, however, to be nothing more than the struggle against a certain capitalism. The reference to the Eastern Menace has the same rounds as those by which the pronounced Japanese nationalism finally determined. Behind both phrases is concealed the struggle between the different capitalist powers. The menace to the working class is not Japan and is not to be sought in the East. It, is capitalism.

Why a New Soviet Constitution?

• M. Yvon

From "*Révolution Proletarienne*," Paris

THE publication of the projected constitution ought to send us looking into the several constitutions that are now mouldering in the archives.

1. The "Declaration of the Rights of the Worker and the Exploited People," adopted in January 1918 by the Third Pan-Russian Soviet Congress.

2. The "Constitution of the Union," approved by the Second Congress of the Soviets of the Union in January 1924.

3. The "Constitution of the Russian Republic of Soviets," approved, in its last edition, by the Twelfth Pan-Russian Congress of Soviets in May 1925.

The first thought that comes to one's mind is: "Why a new constitution? Was it not the last one revolutionary enough? Or was it too revolutionary?"

But we must not insist on too much logic if we are to understand anything here. Constitutional texts are not always revivified in order to change the laws inscribed in them. There is no connection at all between the two in the case of constitutions that are never applied.

All that the workers of Russia might want is already contained in the previous constitutions: total power to their soviets, the land to the peasants, the factories to the workers, the suppression of the exploitation of man by man, full liberty to the laboring classes of all the races in the Union, etc.

Just as fine promises are found in the new constitution, which is marked, however, by several changes in names. There is no more Central Executive Committee of the Union, but a "Supreme Council of the Union." There is no more Union Congress of Soviets but two bodies elected for four years: the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities. Both are shadows of parliaments. Their role will be limited to approving, periodically, the laws and decrees signed by the permanent organs of power—after these laws and decrees have already been applied. There is no more Presidium of the Central Executive Committee but a "Presidium of the Supreme Council." The Council of the Commissars of the People remains intact.

The direct and secret ballot described in the new constitution can have no value as long as the right to defend differing viewpoints is not tolerated and there is no possibility to present candidates other than named by the government. And there is nothing in the scene even suggesting the likelihood of a change in the practice of the present Russian regime.

The establishment of plebiscites in the Soviet Union merely brings closer the Stalinist and Hitlerite forms of governments. It is very convenient—there where all opposition is prohibited, where the press and propaganda are onesided and State repression is pitiless—to excite public opinion over a question puffed up artificially in order to turn out a massive vote. The moral gain drawn here by the dictatorial government is double. The dictatorship poses as a democracy. At the same time it feels the pulse of the population. It can thus discover the importance of the negative votes and the spots where they appear. Keeping the people entirely quiet is risking explosions, which the plebiscite and the secret ballot may help prevent.

Comparing the texts of the several constitutions, we must con-

clude that the important change apparent in the new one is the consecration of the "soviets" as *municipal councils*. They have been no more than that in practice since 1918. But officially the Central Executive Committee was supposed to emanate from the soviets. The new organ of *legal* power, the Supreme Council of the Union, will no longer be presumed to have its origin in the soviets. It will come into being supposedly as a result of special elections. On the day when the new constitution is accepted, the slogan of "Soviets partout!" (Soviets everywhere! raised by the Russian Foreign Legion in the West up to a short while ago—*tr.*) should give way to "Municipal councils everywhere!" The new document brings no change in the real life of the country, and the informed reader of Soviet constitution will continue to hope in vain for at least the slightest application of the new code or the one before; it does not matter which.

Stalin knows well that legal codes are not lacking in the U.S.S.R. There is no need of 146 new articles, divided into twelve chapters to give the country a bit of liberty. What are, the real reasons for the new comedy?

In the first place, the nature of the regime calls for the continual feeding of the enthusiasm of the young generation with solemn and grandiose novelties. The young, are, after all, the support of the country. And they must have the impression of always moving forward. The day when they discover that they have really been marking time will be the day before their disenchanted awakening. That is why all dictatorial governments take a great interest in keeping up the sacred fire and find so many occasions to arouse public enthusiasm. The Bolsheviks have always been past masters in the art of manipulating the poor popular soul.

Moreover, the new society is now taking form. A force less and less resistable is pushing the regime along a certain path of evolution.

This force does not unfortunately spring from below. It is represented by the new elite, which since 1917 has been taking unto itself more and more openly all real economic and administrative power. It comprises the high functionaries of the administration, of the trade unions and of the party; the captains of industry, the superior army officers, heads of the economic structure, the big specialists in arts, letters and science, etc. These cadres of the population enjoy the greater share of the "common" pie. They are becoming more and more aware of the fact that it was for them that the workers and peasants made the revolution. All these people ask, though as yet in confused names, for the normalization of the regime. They want to have the house "put in order." They know that the people cannot be muzzled indefinitely without running the risk of a catastrophe. They are for a new political arrangement but one that does not touch the economic status quo. In other words, they want the political consecration of their economic power.

The new constitution seems to be a prudent step in that direction.

It affirms with some insistence that there are no classes in the country, that everybody has the same rights, and that the goal of the revolution is virtually attained. It is therefore criminal to interfere with the new order of things by laying hands on the "common, socialist" property. That is not expressed clearly enough in the new constitution. But the official commentaries take the trouble to obviate any mistake in the matter by explaining that the new "intelligentsia" is proletarian, that classes have disappeared and that there exists now one indivisible socialist family composed of *different social layers, which are, however, sisters to one another.*

Have not the elites of all times argued, that the continuation of their privileges was a part of a common and sacred task?

The new Russian privileged class asks no more than that. It can make good use of a sort of restricted parliamentarism—just enough of it to regild the blazon of popular democracy in the country and to fool the peasant and worker for some time.

It would not be surprising if it were also true that Stalin had stirred up the affair partly in order to exchange his convert and extra-legal power for the supreme office of the State, that is, for the new title of president of the Presidium of the Supreme Council. It would be quite clever of him to occupy the place before he himself sanctions the transmission of power, this is felt more and more inevitable in the U.S.S.R. Stalin the head of a democracy

for high functionaries and specialists replacing Stalin the dictator. A fine trick to play on the gullible and helpless!

But let us not anticipate too much. In spite of all the possible reasons that we have enumerated, the new constitution is rather a desire than a clear-cut stage toward the normalization of the regime.

We should have reason to express astonishment at the impression the affair is producing in the West if we did not know that the master of the U.S.S.R. has great need of such an impression in order to cement his alliance with the bourgeois democracies. And that is probably not one of the least reasons for the creation of the new constitution.

Tr. by Joan Rouffer

COOPERATIVES, UNIONS, POLITICAL DEMOCRACY

• Rosa Luxemburg

This is the seventh chapter of "Reform or Revolution." The first English translation is being published serially in the INTERNATIONAL REVIEW. Preceding chapters may be obtained by writing to INTERNATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 44, Sta. O, New York, N. Y. The next installment is entitled "Conquest of Political Power."

BERNSTEIN'S socialism offers to the workers the prospect of participating in the wealth of society. The poor are to become rich. How will this socialism be brought about? His articles in the *Neue Zeite (Problems of Socialism)* contain only vague allusions to this question. Adequate information, however, can be found in his book.

Bernstein's socialism is to be realized with the aid of these two means: labor unions—or as Bernstein himself characterizes them, economic democracy—and cooperatives. The first will suppress industrial profit; the second will do away with commercial profit.

Cooperatives—especially cooperatives in the field of production constitute a hybrid form in the midst of capitalism. They can be described as small units of socialized production with capitalist exchange.

But in capitalist economy exchange dominates production.* As a result of competition, the complete domination of the process of production by the interests of capital—that is, pitiless exploitation—becomes a condition for the survival of each enterprise. The domination of capital over the process of production expresses itself in the following ways. Labor is intensified. The work day is lengthened or shortened, according to the situation of the market. And depending on the requirements of the market, labor is either employed or thrown back into the street. In other words, use is made of all methods that enable an enterprise to stand up against its competitors in the market. The workers forming a cooperative in the field of production are thus faced with the contradictory necessity of governing themselves with the utmost absolutism. They are obliged to take toward themselves the role of the capitalist entrepreneur—a contradiction that accounts for the usual failure of production cooperatives, which either become pure capitalist enterprises or, if the workers' interests continue to predominate, end by dissolving.

Bernstein has himself taken note of these facts. But it is

* That is, production depends to a large extent on market possibilities.

evident that he has not understood them. For, together with Mrs. Potter-Webb, he explains the failure of production cooperatives in England by their lack of "discipline." But what is so superficially and flatly called here "discipline" is nothing else than the naturally absolutist regime of capitalism, which, it is plain, the workers cannot successfully use against themselves.*

Production cooperatives can survive within capitalist economy only if they manage to suppress, by means of some detour, the capitalist contradiction between the mode of production and the mode of exchange. And they can accomplish this only by subtracting themselves artificially from the influence of the laws of free competition. And they can succeed in doing the last only when they assure themselves beforehand of a constant circle of consumers, when they assure themselves of a constant market.

It is the consumers' cooperatives that can offer this service to its brother in the field of production. Here—and not in Oppenheimer's distinction between cooperatives that purchase and cooperatives that sell—is the secret sought by Bernstein: the explanation for the invariable failure of production cooperatives functioning independently and their survival when they are backed by consumers' organizations.

If the possibilities of existence of production cooperatives within capitalism are bound to the possibilities of existence of consumers' cooperatives, then the scope of the former is limited, in the most favorable of cases, to the small local market and the manufacture of articles serving immediate needs, especially food products. Consumers', and therefore production cooperatives, are excluded from the most important branches of capitalist production—the textile, mining, metallurgical and petroleum industries, machine construction, locomotive and shipbuilding. For this reason alone (forgetting for the moment their hybrid character), cooperatives in the field of production cannot be thought of as an instrument of a general social transformation. The establishment of production cooperatives on a wide scale would suppose, first of all, the suppression of the world market, the breaking up of the present world economy into small local spheres of production and exchange. The developed, wide capitalism of our time is

* The cooperative factories of the laborers themselves represent within the old form the first beginnings of the new, although they naturally reproduce, and must reproduce, everywhere in their actual organization all the shortcomings of the prevailing system.—*Capital*, Vol. III, p. 521.

expected to fall back to the merchant economy of the Middle Ages.

Within the framework of present society, production cooperatives are limited to the role of simple annexes to consumers' cooperatives. It appears, therefore, that the latter must be the beginning of the proposed social change. But this way the expected reform of society by means of cooperatives ceases to be an offensive against capitalist production. That is, it ceases to be an attack against the principal bases of capital economy. It becomes, instead, a struggle against commercial capital, especially small and middle-sized commercial capital. It becomes an attack made on the twigs of the capitalist tree.

ACCORDING to Bernstein trade unions too are a means of attack against capitalism in the field of production. We have already shown that trade unions cannot give the workers a determining influence over production. Trade unions can neither determine the dimensions of production nor the technical progress of production.

This much may be said about the purely economic side of the "struggle of the rate of wages against the rate of profit," as Bernstein labels the activity of the trade union. It does not take place in the blue of the sky. It takes place within the well defined framework of the law of wages. The law of wages is not shattered but applied as a result of trade union activity.

According to Bernstein, it is the trade unions that lead—in the general movement for the emancipation of the working class—the real attack against the rate of industrial profit. According to Bernstein, trade unions have the task of transforming the rate of industrial profit into "rates of wages." The fact is that trade unions are least able to execute an economic offensive against profit. Trade unions are nothing more than organized *defense* of labor power against the attacks of profit. They express the resistance offered by the working class to the oppression of capitalist economy.

On the one hand, trade unions have the function of influencing through their organization the situation in the labor power market. But this influence is being constantly exceeded by the proletarianization of the middle layers of our society, a process which continually brings new merchandise on the labor market. The second function of the trade unions is to ameliorate the condition of the workers. That is, they attempt to increase the share of the social wealth going to the working class. This share, however, is being reduced, with the fatality of a natural process, by the very growth of the productivity of labor. One does not need to be a Marxist to notice this. It suffices to read Rodbertus' *In Explanation of the Social Question*.

In other words, the objective conditions of capitalist society transform the two economic functions of the trade unions in a sort of labor of Sisyphus,* which is, however, indispensable. For as a result of the activity of his trade unions, the worker succeeds in obtaining for himself the rate of wages due to him in accordance with the situation of the labor power market. As a result of trade union activity, the capitalist law of wages is applied and the effect of the depressing tendency of economic development is paralyzed, or to be more exact, is attenuated.

However, the transformation of the trade union into an instrument for the progressive reduction of profit in favor of wages presupposes the following social conditions; first, the cessation of the proletarianization of the middle strata of our society; secondly

a stop in the growth of productivity of labor. We have here in both cases a *return to precapitalist conditions*.

Cooperatives and trade unions are therefore totally incapable of transforming the *capitalist mode of production*. This is really understood by Bernstein, though in a confused manner. For he refers to cooperatives and trade unions as a means of reducing the profit of the capitalists and thus enriching the workers. This way, he renounces the struggle against the *capitalist mode of production* and attempts to direct the socialist movement to struggle against capitalist distribution.* Again and again, Bernstein refers to socialism as an effort toward a "just," "juster and even more just" (*Vorwärts*, March 26, 1899) mode of production.

It cannot be denied that the direct cause leading at least the popular masses into the socialist movement is precisely the "unjust" mode of distribution characteristic of capitalism. When the social-democracy struggles for the socialization of the entire economy, it aspires therewith also to a "just" distribution of the social wealth. But, guided by Marx's observation that the mode of distribution of a given epoch is a natural consequence of the mode of production of that epoch, the social-democracy does not struggle against distribution in the framework of capitalist production. It struggles instead for the suppression of capitalist production itself. In a word, the social-democracy wants to establish the mode of socialist distribution by suppressing the capitalist mode of production. Bernstein's method, on the contrary, proposes to combat the capitalist mode of distribution in the hope of succeeding that way in establishing gradually the socialist mode of production.

What, in that case, is the basis of Bernstein's program for the reform of society? Does it find support in certain definite tendencies of capitalist production? No. In the first place, he denies those tendencies. In the second place, in view of what was shown above, the socialist transformation of production is for him the effect and not the cause of distribution. He cannot give his program a materialist base, because he has already overthrown the aims and the means of movement for socialism, and therefore its economic conditions. As a result, he is obliged to construct himself an idealist base.

"Why represent socialism as being the consequence of economic compulsion?" he complains. "Why degrade man's understanding, his feeling for justice, his will?" (*Vorwärts*, 26th of March, 1899). Bernstein's superlatively just distribution is to be attained therefore thanks to man's free will, man's will acting not because of economic necessity, since this will itself is only an instrument, but because of man's comprehension of justice, because of man's *idea of justice*.

We thus return quite happily to the principle of justice, so that old war horse on which the reformers of the earth have rocked for ages, lacking surer historic means of transportation. We return to that lamentable Rosinante which the Don Quixotes of history have galloped toward the great reform of the earth, always to come home with their eyes blackened.

The relation of the poor to the rich, as a social base for socialism, the principle of cooperation as the content of socialism, the "most just distribution" as its aim, and the idea of justice as its only historic legitimation—with how much more force, more wit and more fire did Weitling defend that sort of socialism fifty years ago. Indeed, the genius-tailor did not know scientific socialism. And if today, after a half a century, the conception torn into bits by Marx and Engels is

* The mythological king of Corinth who in the lower world was condemned to roll to the top of a hill a huge stone, which constantly rolled back again, making his task incessant.

* The term used by Bernstein to describe the allocation of the total social wealth to the several sections of capitalist society.

patched up and presented to the proletariat as the last word of science, that, too, is the act of a tailor, but it has nothing of the genius about it.

TRADER UNIONS and cooperatives are the economic points of support for the theory of revisionism. Its principal political condition is the growth of democracy. The present manifestations of political reaction are to Bernstein only "displacements." It considers the latter accidental and momentary and asserts that they are not to be considered in the elaboration of the general directives of the labor movement.

According to Bernstein, democracy is an inevitable stage in the development of society. To him, as to the bourgeois theoreticians of liberalism, democracy is the great fundamental law of historic development, the realization of which should be served by all the forces of political life. However, Bernstein's thesis is completely false. Presented in this absolute form, it appears as a petty-bourgeois vulgarization of the results of a very short phase of bourgeois development, the last twenty-five or thirty years. We reach entirely different conclusions when we examine the development of democracy in history a little closer and consider at the same time the political history of capitalism.

In the first place, democracy has been found in the most dissimilar social formations: in primitive communist groups, in the slave states of antiquity and in the medieval communes. And the same way absolutism and constitutional monarchy are to be found under the most varied economic orders. When capitalism began as the production of commodities, it resorted to a democratic constitution in the municipal communes of the Middle Ages. Later, when it developed into manufacture, capitalism found its corresponding political form in the absolute monarchy. Finally, as a developed industrial economy, it brought into being in France, the democratic republic of 1793, the absolute monarchy of Napoleon I, the nobles' monarchy of the Restoration period (1815-1830), the bourgeois constitutional monarchy of Louis-Philippe, then again the democratic republic, and again the monarchy of Napoleon III and finally, for the third time, the Republic. In Germany, the only truly democratic institution—universal suffrage—is not a conquest won by bourgeois liberalism. Universal suffrage in Germany was an instrument for the fusion of the small States. It is only in this sense that it has any importance for the development of the German bourgeoisie, which is otherwise quite satisfied with a semi-feudal constitutional monarchy. In Russia, capitalism prospered for a long time under the regime of oriental absolutism, without having the bourgeoisie manifest the least desire in the world to see the introduction of democracy. In Austria, universal suffrage was above all a safety line thrown to a foundering and decomposing monarchy. In Belgium, the conquest of universal suffrage by the labor movement was undoubtedly due to the weakness of the local militarism, and consequently to the special geographic and political situation of the country. But we have here a "bit of democracy" that has been won not by the bourgeoisie but *against* it.

The uninterrupted victory of democracy, which to our revisionism, as well as to bourgeois liberalism, appears as a great fundamental law of human history and, especially, of modern history, is shown, upon closer examination, to be a phantom. No absolute and general relation can be constructed between capitalist development and democracy. The political form of a given country is always the result of the ensemble of all the political

factors, domestic as well as foreign. It admits, within its limits all variations of the scale, from absolute monarchy to the democratic republic.

We must abandon, therefore, all hope of establishing democracy as a general law of historic development, even within the framework of modern society. Turning to the present phase of bourgeois society, we observe there too political factors that, instead of assuring the realization of Bernstein's schem, lead rather to the abandonment of bourgeois society of the democratic conquests won up to now.

Democratic institutions—and this is of the greatest significance—have completely exhausted their function as aids in the development of bourgeois society. In so far as they were necessary to bring about the fusion of small States and the creation of large modern States (Germany, Italy), they are no longer indispensable at present. Economic development has meanwhile effected an internal organic cicatrization.

The same thing can be said concerning the transformation of the entire political and administrative State machinery from feudal or semi-feudal mechanism to capitalism mechanism. While this transformation has been historically inseparable from the development of democracy, it is realized today to such an extent that the purely democratic "ingredients" of society, as universal suffrage, the republican state form, may be suppressed without having the administration, the State finances, or the military organization find it necessary to return to the forms they had before the March Revolution.*

If liberalism as such is now absolutely useless to bourgeois society, it has become, on the other hand, a direct impediment to capitalism from other viewpoints. Two factors dominate completely, the political life of contemporary States: world politics and the labor movement. Each is only a different aspect of the present phase of capitalist development.

As a result of the development of the world economy and the aggravation and generalization of competition on the world market, militarism and the policy of big navies have become, as instruments of world politics, a decisive factor in the interior as well as in the exterior life of the great States. If it is true that world politics and militarism represent a *rising* tendency in the present phase of capitalism, then bourgeois democracy must logically move in a descending line.

In Germany, the era of great armament begun in 1893 and the policy of world politics inaugurated with the seizure of Kiao-Cheou, were paid for immediately with the following sacrificial victim: the decomposition of liberalism and the deflation of the Center Party, which passed from opposition to government. The recent elections to the Reichstag of 1907, unrolling under the sign of the German colonial policy were at the same time the historical burial of German liberalism.

* The German revolution of 1848, which struck an effective blow against the feudal institutions in Germany.

(This chapter is concluded in next issue)

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SOVIET SOCIALISM— SOVIET CAPITALISM

• Jonathan Ayres

IN ALL TIMES, in all ages, social injustice has evoked opposition to itself. Masters and ruling classes have been overthrown and replaced with new masters and new ruling classes. But the appearance and spread of the capitalist mode of production with its special manner of class oppression and its peculiar social-economic contradictions, points to a solution that instead of replacing the old masters with new ones would apparently free society from bottom to top.

The development of capitalist industry has created and perfected technical conditions that make possible a world free from masters and class differences. With the development and spread of modern industry, the economic-social contradictions belonging to capitalism grow sharper. Out of this condition springs a widespread discontent. This discontent is continually placated. But the social-economic contradictions cannot be subtracted from the present system. Because they increase as capitalist industry advances along the path set for it by the laws of its own process, the social discontent of capitalism must in time overflow the political and religious side-drains where it is now diverted. It must in time lead to a wide-spread understanding that these contradictions cannot be adjusted within capitalism and bring popular action for the abolition of the definite man-to-man relations that go to make up capitalism.

There are persons within our society who understand the nature of the system under which we live and who discern the historical course of capitalist industry. These historically aware persons know that in view of the suffering undergone by most of the population, it is important to shorten or circumvent the detours by the means of which the natural discontent of our society is turned aside from the understanding that will make possible the abolition of the present social arrangement. These historically minded persons are therefore interested in spreading the knowledge of how the capitalist system works. For to understand capitalism is to know what must be done about it.

The movement for the abolition of the capitalist system has come to be described as the socialist movement, because the latter aims to replace the present capitalist relation between product and producer—showing itself in the capitalist appropriation of the product and in the practice of wage labor—with a system in which the means of production will be socially owned and democratically controlled. For only with such ownership and with such control can the capitalist manner of appropriating the product of industry and the typically capitalist relation between employer and wage worker be factually suppressed and advantage taken of the productive forces already developed by capitalism.

It is important for us to notice that while the socialist movement aims to encourage a popular understanding of the need of doing away with the present system, some of the several political movements diverting the social discontent of our society from this general understanding, apply to themselves the term "socialist." Thus, in vulgar usage, the words "socialist" and "socialism" have come to be applied to any political expression of dissatisfaction with the uncomfortable effects of capitalism.

How is this typically capitalist discontent expressed in our society?

It is expressed on the economic field through the natural tendency of wage workers to oppose the interests and will of their employers and to make the best of an inevitably bad bargain by means of trade union action and sabotage. In especially bad times this discontent will take the shape of food and unemployment riots. The spread of capitalist production squeezes to the wall farmers and artisans and other pre-capitalist producers. We therefore find similar anti-capitalist antagonism and activity among social elements whose group interests do not seem to coincide with those of the wage slaves of capitalist industry.

We have already suggested that the social dissatisfaction common to our world feeds a number of political organizations and movements that compete with others for the opportunity to manage the capitalist State. Most parties enter the political arena with the promise of improving the national situation. Only by means of this promise can they hope to acquire the wide backing they must have to win the opportunity of acting as stewards to the capitalist State.

A politician (party or individual) is interested in power, either for so-called idealist or selfish reasons. No matter what his failings may appear to be when judged from the angle of the interests of society as a whole, every politician, individually or in the shape of a party, is opportunist in the following sense. He approaches prospective supporters with offers that he hopes will strike responsive chords in the hearts and minds of his audience. The politicians of capitalist society work with programs that measure up to the illusions and hopes of their customers. This can be said about nationalist, patriotic, reformist and openly reactionary political movements as well as about "labor" and "anti-capitalist" political groups, which try to attract the support of the masses of wage workers and small property-holders on more or less specific class grounds.

An overwhelming portion of the population of our society suffer mentally and physically because they live under the wheels of capitalism. But this great mass does not know the cause of its troubles, though it often lapses into demonstrations of violent class antagonism. The great mass does not recognize capitalism as such, though this suffering mass is itself the most important sector of the capitalist scheme. Not understanding how capitalism works, its victims continue to hope that their condition will be bettered within the same capitalist social-economic setup.

Labor parties, like other political organizations, cater to this belief. Some frankly subscribe to such expectations. Other labor parties argue that they cast their appeal for support in accordance with the dominant outlook of the population because only this way can they hope to attract the support of workers and small property-holders, as the pro-capitalist illusions of the latter change slowly and are hard to overcome. But the nature, the objective worth of a social instrument like a political party is not determined by the private opinions of its manipulators, the so-called leaders of the party. It is precisely the attitude and expectations of the composition of the party and the backing it attracts that determines the nature of the party, its function as an historical instrument. No factual difference, therefore, exists between the two kinds of labor parties. Both express politically the desire of the workers and small-holders of capitalist society to better their condition within the existing system. Both

recruit support by means of this promise. Both acquire State power as a commission to carry out this promise.

Labor parties sometimes succeed in acquiring State power. They then try to run capitalism efficiently and at the same time attempt to carry out the general promise made to their worker and small-propertyholder backers. However, the nature of the capitalist economic process renders this dual task self-contradictory. Such attempts always meet with failure. The defeat of the labor governments is always followed with a pro-capitalist reaction.

Since the words "socialist" and "socialism" are known to have an anti-capitalist connotation, the labor parties tend to use both terms to describe their efforts of getting political support on the basis of the social discontent common to capitalism. They also use these terms to describe their attempts to modify the bad effects of capitalism at the time when they wield the stewardship of the capitalist State. It is natural that the inevitable failure of Labor governments be described by the apologists of capitalist society as the failure of socialism. This helps to delay the spread of a genuine socialist understanding. It helps to preserve capitalism.

More serious, however, is the influence of a laborite government which claims that it is actually engaged upon transforming the basis of society, which proclaims far and wide that it has abolished capitalism, by the sheer act of becoming a government, and is building socialism.

Such pretense, if it is no more than that, may have tremendous historical importance in facilitating the modernization and industrial development of the country in question. But if the relations typical of capitalism do not really disappear in this "land of socialism," if the modernization and industrial development merely bring modified capitalist forms accompanied with exploitation of labor that seems to out-herod the practices of the older capitalist countries, then such pretense threatens the socialist movement with the greatest setback it has ever suffered.

An enterprising American political writer, wise to the demand of the current book market, has recently penned a "volume" entitled *Does Socialism Work?* By Socialism he means the "Soviet experiment." (I am using the language of the spirit-broken, depression intellectuals, who panicky in their eagerness to stop up their mental and physical emptiness, now reach out to the mystic East for a wonder-working alchemic experiment.) The Webb menage, which way back in the 90's had proved that capitalism had reached its days of repentance and was gradually and peacefully converting itself into something better, has just produced a very thick tome describing "Soviet Communism, a New Civilization." At the beginning of the 20th century similarly thick volumes by the same household were important in promoting the illusions of "revisionism," which, though disproved by the later experience of capitalism, stands in history for one of the greatest reverses suffered by the socialist movement. The revisionists grounded their hopes and claims on the supposed acts and intentions of British labor, and it was the Webbs who told the world what were the real acts and the real intentions of British labor. It is clear now that the revisionists mistook appearances for reality and that the Webbs of 1900 were merely hacks exploiting as a subject the "Labor Science of their time." (If Christian Science, why not Labor Science?)

It is not enough, however, to label as "juridical cretinism" the Webbs' 1000 paged rewrite of the mimeographed circulars issued by the Soviet department of foreign enlightenment for the benefit of visiting "Labor Scientists" of our day.

Hitler, too, speaks of building socialism within the boundaries of Germany. But it is easy to disprove Hitler's claims. Different is the case made out for the Soviet State. It came into being as a result of a revolution which spoke the language of international socialism. The Russian Revolution swept away the old outworn feudalistic State, but it dispossessed the private capitalist entrepreneurs as well as the large landowners. During the post-revolutionary period State industrial enterprise was installed in the place of private enterprise. And from 1929 to 1931, so runs the claim of the typical Soviet publicity man, "the last substantial class of persons who derived their income from the possession of means of production (alas—peasants and artisans) was dispossessed." Isn't that the emergence of socialism?

If it is not the emergence of socialism, if we are facing here another historical mystification, if we have here instead of rising socialism the hothouse growth of national capitalism (as Engels put it) taking place under the protective covering of talk about socialism, then it is essential for the cause of world emancipation to unmask the fraud and to proclaim it as such though it may break the hearts of our very best and most sensitive people.

There is a world war around the corner. Capitalism continues to receive the support of the great masses of the population largely because they continue to confuse their own interests with the interests of the "nation," under which are masked the interests of the dominant class, the class that profits by the continuance of the capitalist scheme of things. This deception is most effectively practiced in time of war. The Soviet State is a member of one of the war blocs. In its role as the fatherland of socialism it calls on the historically aware workers of the world to rally the masses of the population on the side of the war bloc of which it is a member. The workers in the countries allied with the Soviet Union are asked to identify their interests with the interests of their master class because the interests of their "nations" now equal the national interests of the Soviet Union.

It is important for the historically conscious elements in the labor movement of the world to know whether enrolling or the encouragement of enrolling in the allied national armies, on the side of the Soviet Union, would really serve the cause of world socialism.

A sober investigation into the nature of what is described by the Soviet publicists as Russian socialism is usually hindered by the objection that such a study will put in question the claims of the Soviet State. For the next war the Russian government counts on the support of millions of workers and intellectuals who believe that the national cause of Soviet Russia is the cause of socialism. Doubt cast on the Soviet claims tend to disorganize this support. It weakens the war chances of the Soviet Union and its allies, whose probable opponents will be Hitlerite Germany and other Fascist and near-Fascist States. Doubt cast on the socialist claims of the Soviet Union strengthens the Fascist opponents of the Soviet Union. It strengthens Hitler and Fascism. An unequivocal investigation of the socialist claims of the Soviet Union is in itself a Fascist act.

Indeed, Fascism is bad. It signifies the cruel suppression of political minorities by the one-party State. It subordinates in a brutal manner the immediate interests of the working class to the so-called interests of the nation, which, as usual, hide the interests of capitalist enterprise. Fascism—a populist movement of social reform, a radical expression of the social discontent common to capitalism—resorts to egregious nationalist and racist illusions to divert the attention and understanding of the popu-

lation of the country from their real immediate and historic interests. The Fascist politicians, like many laborite politicians, even speak of abolishing capitalism and building national socialism. But it is evident that the capitalism they serve is the same capitalism as is served by the more "democratic" stewards of the contemporary State. The Fascists' procedure may be said to be marked by the assuredness that comes with the possession and control of overwhelming majorities.

The historically aware members of the labor movement oppose Fascism not so much for its cruelty to minorities, nor especially because Fascism statizes labor organizations, turning them into company unions. The Fascists have no monopoly on cruelty to minorities, nor are the avowedly Fascist States the only States that turn labor economic organizations into company unions serving the needs and designs of the production managers of the national industry. The historically understanding person opposes Fascism especially because it is a form of the political superstructure of capitalism that is very effective in diverting the social discontent of our society away from the spread of the class viewpoint that will make possible a genuine socialist revolution.

In 1914 many of us chose between "bad" and "good" capitalist States. German workers gave their lives for their national capitalism because its opponents was Tsarist barbarism. French and British workers went to die for their national masters because they believed that the slaughter was a war to save democracy from Kaiserism. Indeed, there are and have been good and bad capitalist States. There is no doubt that French republican democracy appeared more likable than Prussian imperialism and German civilization seemed to be a worthier object of defence than Russian Tsarism. But did democracy really win with the victory of the democratic allies over imperial Germany, and did German culture come to flourish precisely because anachronistic Tsarism was smashed in the fields and swamps of Eastern Europe by the superior arms of progressive Germany? The position of the historically intelligent member of the labor movement is that the fine causes of progress, culture and democracy are tied up with the victory of real socialism. There is more than a possibility that a great wave of economic nationalism will sweep the globe after the next World War. The era of Fascism or National Socialism or National Communism is yet to come. Capitalism will seek safety in new illusions, built of the same confusion, of the same mystification, that is now being resorted to by the National Socialists or National Communists of our time.

It is essential to make clear what is not socialism. It is essential—from the viewpoint of the need of a socialist revolution—to probe fearlessly. Hesitancy in this case does not spell opposition to Fascism. It is merely the same old surrender to the multicolored carnival of the saviors of capitalism that we witnessed in 1914.

Clause 4 of the new Soviet Constitution reads: "The economic basis of the U.S.S.R. is the Socialist economic system, and the Socialist property of the means of production." But it is not enough for us to corroborate or disprove the claim that there is Socialism in Russia today. We must do more. We must answer: "Is socialism or capitalism developing in the Soviet Union?"

And this question can not be answered by citations from Lenin. It can not be answered by retelling the heroism of the Russian revolutionists or the consequent sacrifices and suffering of the Russian people. It cannot be answered by making references to "tactical mistakes," to wrong or correct party lines, to "bureaucratic degeneration," to the victory of a crafty Stalin over a revolutionary Trotsky, or even to the defeat of the "World

Revolution." The course taken by the Soviet Union has not and will not be decided wholly by the idealism, selfishness, shortsightedness or historic vision of certain personages. These personages and the great mass of human beings act to satisfy their needs, their ambitions, their ideals. But they do so wielding the circumstances they find at hand. Even the defeat of the putative World Revolution was not accidental. Even the existence of a belief or the stimulation of a belief that there was a World Revolution on the scene was not accidental.

Whether the socialist claims of the Soviet Union are justified or not can only be shown by an unsentimental study of 1. the circumstances that brought the Soviet State into being, 2. of the economic, social and political evolution of the country since the revolution; 3. of the relation of the worker to his product; 4. of the Soviet social stratification, 5. of the worker's relation to the existing State.

In the same manner, the question whether or not we must join our national armies in the support of the Soviet Union and its allies in the next war can not be answered by considering the goodness or badness of the probable combatants or even the rate of Russia's hesitancy or readiness to aid the Spanish democratic republic in its fight against the reactionary rebels. This question can only be answered by discovering the effect that such a war stand (by persons who recognize the capitalist origin of wars) will have on the cause of world socialism.

We must first make clear what is capitalism. Only then shall we know what is socialism. Only then shall we be able to recognize when capitalism is being abolished.

Therefore the notes found below touch on the following topics:

1. What is capitalism?
2. What can be socialism?
3. Historic conditions in Russia before the revolution.
4. The Russian Revolution: 1917-1928.
5. Solving the backwardness of Russia.
6. The evolution of the Soviet State.
7. The worker and industry in Russia today. Social stratification in the "land of Soviets."
8. The worker and the State in Russia today.
9. Communist International to League of Nations: Soviet foreign policy from 1917 to 1928.

(Continued in next issue)

WHO BETRAYED SPAIN?

(From page 140)

elements in their own country. And they feared to alienate Great Britain, the indispensable ally of capitalist France.

Blum and his "socialists" were afraid for the cause of peace. The French Communists, expressing the outlook of their political fatherland, also expressed fear that intervention might shatter the momentary *status quo* in Europe and would be a signal for Hitler's attack at a time when Italy was not yet in the allied bag. Indeed, the Soviet Union was at that moment quite worried by the British talks with Hitler. And it was quite occupied in making the first proposal of a sort of Popular Front in Italy in the hope of influencing Mussolini in the direction of a Franco-Soviet-British-Italian alliance.

The neutrality arrangement seemed to satisfy everybody but the Spanish people. Prieto commented sarcastically on the behavior of France and the U.S.S.R., but nobody minded Prieto. The French anti-fascists sent gifts of chocolate and woolen socks to the workers' militia in need of ammunition. The Soviet workers were taxed

by their government so that candy and sweaters with a hammer and sickle insignia may be sent to the children of Spain. The anti-fascist front outside of Spain seemed to be quite happy, conscious of making the best of a ticklish situation. Then danger signs became visible.

Workers started to grumble. The Soviet position of silent neutrality in the Spanish situation threatened the status of the U.S.S.R. as the self-appointed head of the anti-fascist forces of the world. There was the danger of the Soviets' loss of their mass following in France and elsewhere. Russia's proletarian and anti-fascist following will be one of its greatest assets in the coming war.

Furthermore, Blum's infatuation with peace was leading him close to friendship with Hitler. The Paris reception of Schacht was a case in point. There appeared the Moscow project of substituting the Popular Front government in France with a "French Front" government, representing all political elements, rightist, fascist, communist, militarist, agreed on the attitude of belligerency to Hitler. The rise in the cost of living had robbed the French workers of most of their gains in the recent general strike. Inspired by the French Communists there arose a new strike movement. It had the mixed program of higher wages, arms and planes for Spain and the overthrow of Blum. The strike movement subsided as suddenly as it arose. It became apparent to the people who inspired it that the fall of the Blum government would not lead to a "French Front" government but to a rightist reaction which might endanger the Franco-Soviet pact.

On the 26th of September, one month after all the great European powers had signed the neutrality pact, del Vayo, the Foreign Minister of Spain, addressed the League of Nations in protest against the policy of non-intervention. He said it was practically "intervention in favor of the rebels."

The Madrid government had in its possession about a billion dollars in gold. Neither Mexico nor the Scandinavian countries had signed the non-intervention pact. The United States government did not recognize the rebels as belligerents. Its official attitude, as was declared to the Spanish representative in America, was that it considered the Madrid government as the legitimate government of Spain which was in the process of putting down a revolt. Much expert military service—the best—and much military equipment can be bought with a billion dollars, though France, Great Britain, Switzerland and the U.S.S.R. remain honorably neutral and refuse to sell.

Is it true that there were found within the reconstituted government in Madrid influential persons who, owing their prior allegiance to another power, sabotaged all attempts to get considerable supplies from abroad because they understood that their foreign patron was not to lose the opportunity to appear as the first and only power to help democratic Spain, even though poor Spain might have to wait a long time and the patron would not send help of any great value? Is it true that for some time the Madrid government, undoubtedly influenced by the elements mentioned above, denied the Catalonian request for a loan of some of this gold, though it was to be used for economic reconstruction, through enterprises run by the Catalonian labor unions, and naturally for the immediate development of the armament industry? Did the fear of the Syndicalists persist?

Del Vayo's protest was given little publicity. Both Delbos and Litvinov, however, found it advisable to apologize to the world. Each excused his government in his own way. But breaking all rules of diplomatic procedure, del Vayo distributed to the member-delegates of the League a "White Book," containing documents establishing the facts of violations of the non-intervention

pact by Italy, Germany and especially Portugal. Del Vayo's protest was addressed not so much to the players in Geneva as to the popular masses in the so-called democratic countries. His action did not inconvenience Great Britain to any great extent. Neither were the French politicians flustered. But it put the U.S.S.R. on the spot, so to say. The position of the Soviet State was made doubly uncomfortable because to the doubt which started to invade the minds of its foreign followers as a result of the persisting great difference between the Soviet claims and Soviet acts in the Spanish situation there was added a sort of dumb consternation at the Moscow executions of the old Bolsheviks.

Beating del Vayo to his next move, but using the data contained in his White Book, the Soviet representative suddenly presented the League Committee for Non-Intervention with a protest against the reported violations. "If these violations do not cease immediately," declared the Soviet note, "the U.S.S.R. will consider itself free from engagements flowing from the non-intervention agreement." This was followed by the Russian proposal that the French and British navies blockade the ports of Portugal against ships carrying arms to the rebels in Spain. But the Russian declaration did not even cause a fluttering in the diplomatic dovecoats of Europe. There were flowery counter-charges by the Italian and German representatives. The "neutral" British made peace by chalking up infractions against both the Italians and Russians. The Soviet plan for a blockade was somehow said to be incorporated by chairman Lord Plymouth in his own proposal to establish an inspection committee touring Spain. The counter-charges against the Russians were pure inventions, taken good-naturedly by the accused. The real violations of the "certain powers" continued. The U.S.S.R. was happy to think that the anti-fascist masses of Europe and America might believe that it had really violated the neutrality pact. The blockade of democratic Spain continued. The U.S.S.R. still considered itself bound by the "engagements flowing from the non-intervention agreement." But its revolutionary and anti-fascist face was saved. The Soviet government could go on posing as the head of the anti-Fascist forces protecting democracy in Spain. Indeed, when the rebel forces were in the suburbs of Madrid, the Stalinist hookup all over the world started to appease the Soviet followers by the then perfectly groundless rumor that the U.S.S.R. had been sending arms to Spain since the day after July 19.

This is certain. It is only after the 27th of September, the day when Litvinov, alarmed at del Vayo's insistence, took the opportunity to explain why the Soviet Union had signed the neutrality pact, only then did the Soviet henchmen within the Madrid government permit the billion or so of gold dollars held for Madrid in the banks of France and England to begin buying a considerable amount of war material in the wide market. We hope it is not too late. Unlike the arms of 1789 and 1870 the most destructive war arms of today cannot be used, or used effectively, by untrained civilian combatants.

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